



New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge

Language Arts Literacy

Grade 3 and Grade 4

Assessment Samples

PTM #1505.59

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New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge

Language Arts Literacy

Grade 3 and Grade 4

ASSESSMENT SAMPLES

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Introduction

This document contains samples of Language Arts Literacy materials from the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK). These materials, which appeared on actual grade 3 and grade 4 tests, are released samples and, therefore, are no longer considered secure assessment documents. The materials are illustrative of the kinds of writing and reading tasks and test questions that students encounter with the NJ ASK. Pages from this document may be duplicated and used for instructional purposes in the classroom.

Pages 3-25 provide the grade 3 samples of a narrative writing task and a narrative reading passage and associated items (or test questions).

Pages 26-41 provide the grade 4 samples of a poem and its associated writing prompt along with an everyday reading passage and associated items.

Appendix A provides an annotated answer key for the multiple-choice questions and an explanation of the skill assessed by each item. For sample responses to the reading-based open-ended questions, refer to the companion NJ ASK document, *Guide to Criterion-Based Holistic Scoring: A Writing and Reading Handbook*.

Appendix B provides an overview of the test design, that is, the test specifications and the scoring rubrics used to score student responses to the writing tasks and reading-based open-ended questions. For sample responses to both the writing tasks and the open-ended questions included in these released samples, refer to the companion NJ ASK document, *Guide to Criterion-Based Holistic Scoring: A Writing and Reading Handbook*.

Acknowledgments

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“Rocket Balloon” from *Earth and Space* by Laura Buller and Ron Taylor. Reprinted by permission of Marshall Cavendish.

Writing Task 1

Using the picture on page 4 as a guide, write a story about what might be happening.

You may take notes, create a web, or do other prewriting work in the space provided on pages 5 and 6. Then, write your story on the lines provided on pages 7 and 8.

Here is a checklist for you to follow to help you do your best writing. Please read it silently as I read it aloud to you.

Writer's Checklist

Remember to

- ☐ Keep the central idea or topic in mind.
- ☐ Keep your audience in mind.
- ☐ Support your ideas with details, explanations, and examples.
- ☐ State your ideas in a clear sequence.
- ☐ Include an opening and a closing.
- ☐ Use a variety of words and vary your sentence structure.
- ☐ State your opinion or conclusion clearly.
- ☐ Capitalize, spell, and use punctuation correctly.
- ☐ Write neatly.

After you write your story, read what you have written. Use the checklist to make certain that your writing is the best it can be.





WRITING TASK 1 – PREWRITING SPACE

Use the space below and on page 6 to plan your writing.



WRITING TASK 1 – PREWRITING SPACE (continued)

Remember — your story must be written on the lines on pages 7 and 8 ONLY.



[illegible]

WRITING TASK 1 (continued)

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



**DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.**

Do not
write in
this area.



Some questions will be multiple-choice; others will be open-ended.

- DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA.

Sample Multiple-Choice Question

For this type of question, select the best answer and fill in the circle next to the answer you choose. For example:

According to the passage, which question would a weather report answer?

- ☐ (A) Where are we?
- ☐ (B) What time is it?
- ☐ (C) Who are you?
- ☒ (D) How hot is it?

The correct answer is D. The circle with the D in it has been filled in to show that D is the correct answer.

Sample Open-Ended Question

For this type of question, you will write several sentences on the lines provided. For example:

According to the passage, weather is the condition of the air in a certain time and place. Why would it be important to know what the weather is today or what it will be tomorrow? Be sure to use examples or ideas from the passage or your own life to support your answer.

It is important to know what the weather is so you
can plan what you are going to do. If you decide to go
swimming, but you don't know what the weather is
going to be like, you could find yourself swimming
between the raindrops or the snowflakes!

[These are the first two sentences of a good answer.]



Directions: Read the story and answer the questions that follow.



Brave as a Mountain Lion

by Ann Herbert Scott

It was snowing hard. Pressing his face against the cold glass of the living room window, Spider could barely see his father's horses crowding against the fence. Soon the reservation would be covered with darkness.

Spider shivered. Any other night he would have been hoping his father would reach home before the snow drifted too high to push through. But tonight was different. Tonight he dreaded his father's coming.

In his pocket Spider could feel two pieces of paper from school. One he wanted to show his father. One he didn't. Not tonight. Not ever.

Beside him on the couch his sister Winona was playing with her doll. Lucky kid, thought Spider. Winona was too little to worry about anything, especially school.

Just then Spider saw the blinking red lights of the snowplow clearing the road beside their house. Right behind came his father's new blue pickup. Spider sighed. At least Dad was home safe. Now the trouble would begin!

Winona ran to the back door. But Spider stayed on the couch, waiting. From the kitchen he could smell dinner cooking. His favorite, deer meat. But tonight he didn't even feel like eating. Soon he heard the sound of his father and his brother Will stomping the snow from their boots.

Spider's father came in with an armful of mail from the post office. He hung up his hat and jacket on the pegs by the kitchen and stretched out in his favorite chair.

"So what did you do in school today?" he asked Spider.

"Not much," said Spider, feeling his pocket.

"Did you bring home any papers?"



Spider nodded. How did his father always know?

“Let’s take a look,” said his father.

Spider took the first paper from his pocket. “Here’s the good one,” he said.

“Spelling one hundred percent. Every word correct. Good for you, son.”

“But, Dad, I’m in trouble.” Spider shoved the other paper into his father’s hand. “The teacher wants me to be in the big school spelling bee.”

Spider’s father read out loud: “Dear parent, I am pleased to inform you that your son Spider has qualified for the school

spelling bee, which will be held next Thursday night. We hope you and your family will attend.”

Spider’s mother and grandmother came in from the kitchen with the platter of deer meat and bowls of beans and corn for dinner. “That’s a good report, Little Brother,” his grandmother said, smiling.

“But I won’t do it,” said Spider.

“Why not?” asked Will.

“I’m too afraid,” said Spider.

“But you’re a brave boy,” said his father. “Why are you afraid?”

“Dad,” said Spider, “you have to stand high up on the stage in the gym and all the people look at you. I’m afraid my legs would freeze together and I wouldn’t be able to walk. And if I did get up there, no sound would come out when I opened my mouth. It’s too scary.”

“Oh, I see,” said his father.

Spider's mother put her hand on his shoulder. "You must be hungry. Let's eat."

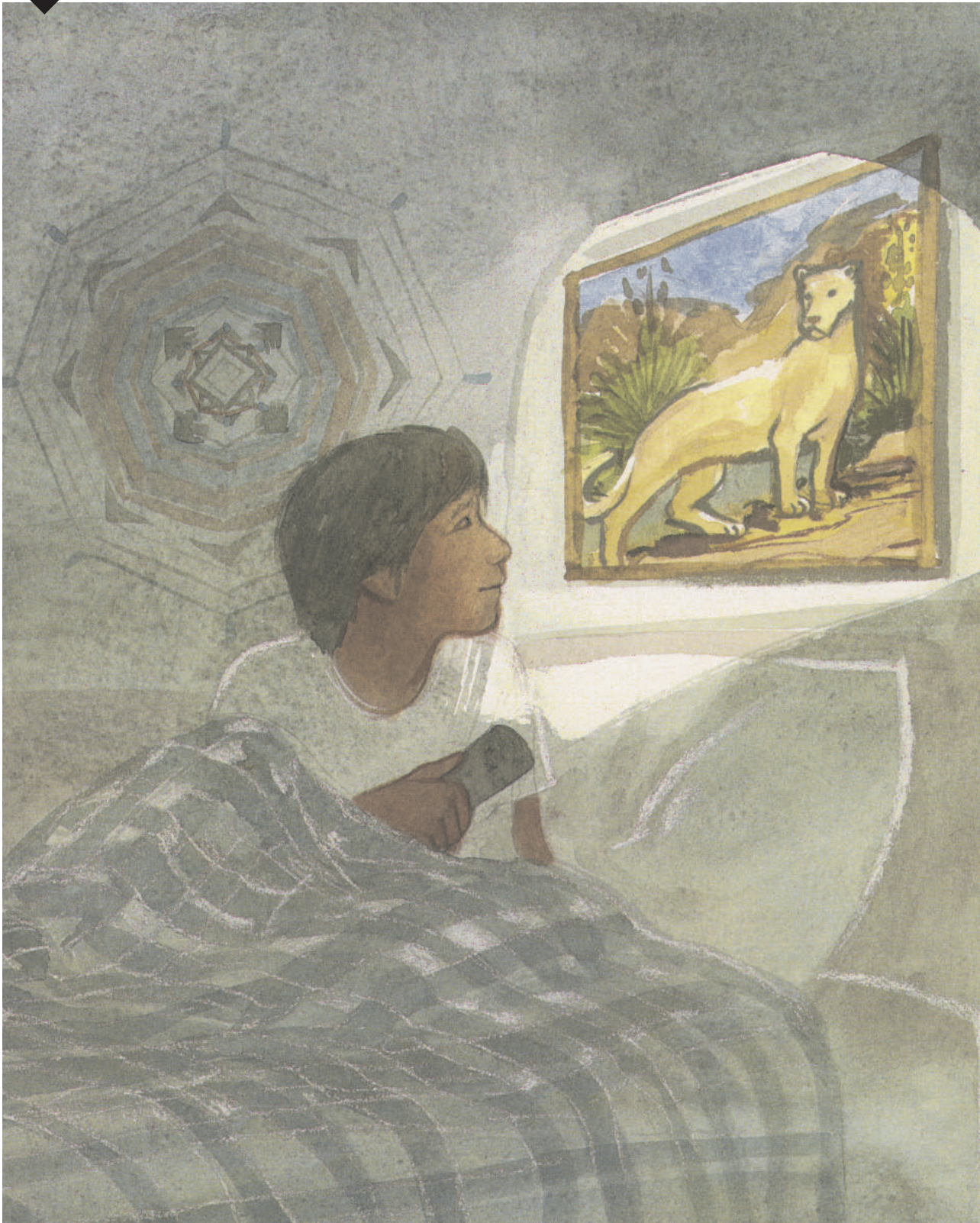
After dinner Spider sat by the wood stove doing his homework. “Dad, were you ever in a spelling bee?” he asked.

“As a matter of fact, I was.”

“Were you scared?”

“I was very scared. I didn’t even want to do it. But then my father told me to pretend I was a brave animal, the strongest, bravest animal I could think of. Then I wasn’t afraid anymore.”





Later, Spider sat up in bed thinking of animals who weren't afraid of anything. Above his head hung the picture of a mountain lion his dad had painted for him. How about a mountain lion, the King of the Beasts?

Spider took his flashlight from under his pillow and shined its beam on the face of the great wild creature. "Brave as a mountain lion," he said to himself in a loud, strong voice.

"Brave as a mountain lion," he repeated in his mind as he was falling asleep.

"I'll try to be brave as a mountain lion," he whispered to his father the next morning as he brushed his hair for school.

At recess the next day Spider peeked into the gymnasium. The huge room was empty. He looked up at the mural painting of the western Shoshone people of long ago. They were brave hunters of deer and antelope and elk, just as his father and his uncles were today.

At the far end of the gym was the scoreboard with the school's emblem, the eagle. Every Saturday in the winter Spider and his whole family came to cheer for Will and the basketball team. Those players weren't afraid of anything.

Then Spider stared up at the stage. That's where the spellers would stand. He could feel his throat tighten and hear his heart thumping, bumpity-bumpity-bumpity-bump. How could he ever get up there in front of all the people? Spider ran outside, slamming the gym door behind him.

That afternoon it was still snowing. At home Spider found his grandmother beading a hatband for his father's birthday. Spider watched her dip her needle into the bowls of red and black and white beads.

"Grandma, were you ever in a spelling bee?"

"No, I never was," his grandmother answered. "Are you thinking much about it?"

"All the time," said Spider.

"What's the worst part?"

"Being up on the stage with all the people looking at you."

“Oh, that’s easy,” said his grandmother. “You can be clever. Clever as a coyote. The coyote always has some trick to help him out of trouble. When you’re up there on the stage, you don’t have to look at the people. You can turn your back on them and pretend they aren’t even there.”

In bed that night Spider pulled the covers over his head. “Brave as a mountain lion, clever as a coyote,” he kept repeating to himself as he fell asleep.

The next morning Spider scraped a peephole in the ice on his bedroom window. He couldn’t see the far mountains for the swirling snow. He smiled as he packed his book bag. If it kept snowing like this, maybe the principal would close school tomorrow.

In class that day all everybody could talk about was the spelling bee. “Can we count on you, Spider?” asked Miss Phillips, his teacher.

Spider shook his head. “Maybe,” he said. “I haven’t made up my mind.”

“You’d better make up your mind soon,” said Miss Phillips. “The spelling bee is tomorrow night.”

After lunch Spider walked by the gym door, but this time he didn’t open it. He didn’t have to. He remembered just how everything looked. Scary. When he thought about it, a shiver went all the way down his spine.

By the afternoon the snow had piled in drifts higher than Spider’s head. Spider got a bowl of popcorn and went to the carport to watch Will shoot baskets. Time after time the ball slipped through the net. Will almost never missed.

“How about some popcorn for me?” Will asked his little brother. Spider brought back another bowl from the kitchen.

“Are you practicing for the spelling bee?” asked Will.

“I’ve decided not to be in it,” said Spider. “I’m going to be brave when I’m bigger.”

Will nodded. “I remember those spelling bees.”

“Were you afraid?” asked Spider.

“I was scared silly,” said Will. “I was so scared I was afraid I’d wet my pants. Then I learned the secret.”

“What’s the secret?” asked Spider.

“To be silent.”

“Silent?” asked Spider. “What does that do?”

“It keeps you cool. When I have a hard shot to make and the whole team depends on me, that’s when I get very silent.”

Spider didn't say anything. He just watched his brother shooting one basket after another. Then he saw her. High above the shelves of paint and livestock medicines was a tiny insect. It was his old friend, Little Spider, dangling on a long strand as she spun a new part of her web. She was silent. Silent as the moon.

Spider laughed. How could he have forgotten! Grandmother often told him how when he was a baby in his cradle board he used to watch for hours while a little spider spun her web above his head. She had been his first friend. Ever since, his family had called him Spider.

Taking the stepladder, Spider climbed up close so he could watch the tiny creature. How brave she was, dropping down into space with nothing to hang onto. And how clever, weaving a web out of nothing but her own secret self. “Say something,” he whispered.

The little insect was silent. But Spider felt she was talking to him in her own mysterious way. “Listen to your spirit,” she seemed to say. “Listen to your spirit and you’ll never be afraid.”



The next morning the snow had stopped. Outside Spider's window icicles glistened in the sun. No chance of school being closed today.

"Brave as a mountain lion, clever as a coyote, silent as a spider," Spider thought to himself as he buttoned his vest.

Winona pushed open the door. "Are you going to do it?"

"I'm going to do it," Spider answered.

That night all the family came, his grandmother who lived with them and his other grandparents and his father and his mother and three aunts and two uncles and



Will and Winona and lots of their cousins. Three of his cousins were going to be in the spelling bee, too.

Brave as a mountain lion, Spider climbed up the steps to the stage. Clever as a coyote, he turned his back so he wouldn't see the rows of people down below. Silently, he listened to his spirit. Bumpity-bump-bump went his heart.

All the best spellers in his class were up there on the stage, standing in a line. The principal gave them the words, one by one.

At first the words were easy. "Yellow," said the principal. "I have a yellow dog."

Spider kept his eyes on the principal's face. "Yellow," said Spider. "Y-e-l-l-o-w. Yellow."

"Correct," said the principal.

Then the words got a little harder. "February," said the principal. "Soon it will be February." It was Spider's turn again.

"February," said Spider, remembering the *r*. "Capital f-e-b-r-u-a-r-y. February."

"Correct," said the principal.

Finally there were only two spellers left standing—Spider and Elsie, a girl from the other side of the reservation.

"Terrific," said the principal. "We have a terrific basketball team."

"Terrific," said Spider, taking a big breath. "T-e-r-r-i-f-f-i-c. Terrific."

“Incorrect,” said the principal. Then he turned to Elsie. “Terrific. We have a terrific basketball team.”

“Terrific,” said Elsie. “T-e-r-r-i-f-i-c. Terrific.”

“Correct,” said the principal. “Let’s give a hand to our two winners from Miss Phillips’ class: Elsie in first place and Spider in second place.”

It was over! Spider climbed down the steps and found the rows where his family were sitting. Spider's father shook his hand and Will slapped him on the back. "You did it!" his mother said proudly. "You stood right up there in front of everybody!"

“It was easy,” said Spider.

“You were brave,” said his father. “Brave as a mountain lion.”

“And clever,” said his grandmother. “Clever as a coyote.”

I wasn't even afraid, Spider thought. I listened to my spirit. "But now I'm hungry," he told his family. "Hungry as a bear. Let's all go home and eat."



1. What is a theme of “Brave as a Mountain Lion”?

- Ⓐ Hard work can lead to good ideas.
- Ⓑ Nature teaches us about ourselves.
- Ⓒ We can do hard things with help from others.
- Ⓓ Everything we know we learn in school.

2. At the beginning of the story, why doesn’t Spider feel like eating dinner?

- Ⓐ He is too worried to eat.
- Ⓑ He does not like deer meat.
- Ⓒ He is waiting for his father.
- Ⓓ He has to study for a spelling bee.

3. On page 14, the school letter states that Spider has been chosen for the spelling bee. Why was he chosen?

- Ⓐ The teacher thinks Spider wants to be on stage.
- Ⓑ Spider’s father was in a spelling bee.
- Ⓒ People know that Spider is brave and clever.
- Ⓓ Spider spelled every word correctly on the spelling test.



4. How does Spider's family help him prepare for the spelling bee?

- Ⓐ They help Spider study his spelling words.
- Ⓑ They give Spider a picture of a mountain lion.
- Ⓒ They tell Spider to practice in the school gym.
- Ⓓ They give Spider advice on how to be brave.

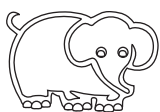
5. In "Brave as a Mountain Lion," what does Spider learn about his family?

- Ⓐ They all live together.
- Ⓑ They all have felt afraid.
- Ⓒ They all have been in spelling bees.
- Ⓓ They all are brave, clever, and silent.

6. What lesson does "Brave as a Mountain Lion" teach?

- Ⓐ Practicing helps you succeed.
- Ⓑ Good ideas come from patience.
- Ⓒ Facing a challenge makes you a "winner."
- Ⓓ Silence leads to learning.

Do not
write in
this area.



**For the open-ended question on the next page,
remember to**

- Focus your response on the question asked.
- Answer all parts of the question.
- Give a complete explanation.
- Use specific information from the story.



- 7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.**

- **Explain how each one helps Spider.**
- **Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.**

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

[illegible]

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



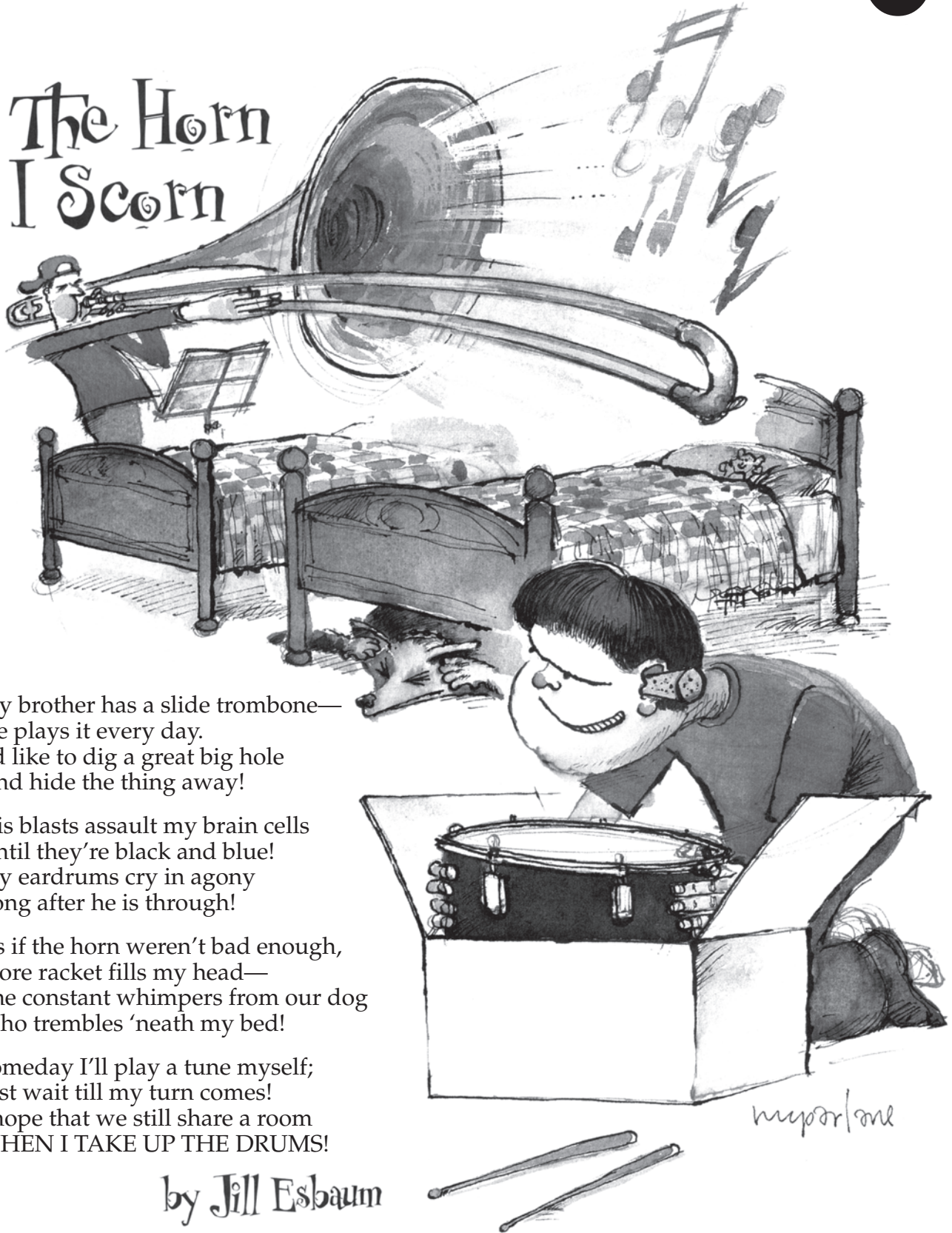
**CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.**

Directions to the Student

Read the poem “The Horn I Scorn” to yourself while I read it aloud to you. Afterwards, you will do a writing task. The poem may give you ideas for your writing.



The Horn I Scorn



by Jill Esbaum

Page 27

TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE.



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA.



Writing Task 2

In “The Horn I Scorn,” the poet Jill Esbaum writes about a problem that comes from having to share. At one time or another, most of us have to share something with someone else. Write a composition about the difficulties of having to share something you value.

In your composition, be sure to

- describe what it is you have to share.
- discuss the problems that come from having to share it.
- explain how you solved the problems.

You may take notes, create a web, or do other prewriting work in the space provided on pages 29 and 30. Then, write your composition on the lines provided on pages 31 and 32.

Here is a checklist for you to follow to help you do your best writing. Please read it silently as I read it aloud to you.

Writer’s Checklist

Remember to

- ☐ Keep the central idea or topic in mind.
- ☐ Keep your audience in mind.
- ☐ Support your ideas with details, explanations, and examples.
- ☐ State your ideas in a clear sequence.
- ☐ Include an opening and a closing.
- ☐ Use a variety of words and vary your sentence structure.
- ☐ State your opinion or conclusion clearly.
- ☐ Capitalize, spell, and use punctuation correctly.
- ☐ Write neatly.

After you write your composition, read what you have written. Use the checklist to make certain that your writing is the best it can be.



WRITING TASK 2 – PREWRITING SPACE
Use the space below and on page 30 to plan your writing.



WRITING TASK 2 – PREWRITING SPACE (continued)

Remember—your composition must be written on the lines on pages 31 and 32 ONLY.



WRITING TASK 2

Lined area for writing the response.



Bubble grid for marking answers.



WRITING TASK 2 (continued)

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. In the bottom right corner, there is a black octagonal stop sign with the word "STOP" written in white capital letters.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



**DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.**

Do not
write in
this area.



Directions to the Student

In the following section, you will read a passage and answer the questions that follow.

Some questions will be multiple-choice; others will be open-ended.

1. You may look back at the reading passage as often as you want.
2. Read each question carefully and think about the answer.
3. For each multiple-choice question, select the best answer and fill in the circle next to your choice. Make sure you fill in the correct circle.
4. If you do not know the answer to a question, go on to the next question. You may come back to the skipped question later if you have time.

Sample Passage

The sample passage below and the questions on the next page show you what the questions are like and how to mark your answer.

Weather is the condition of the air at a certain time and place. Knowing what the weather is going to be is useful whether you are planning a special event or performing a task. One way to learn about the weather is to listen to a weather report.

A weather report usually answers these questions: (1) What is the temperature? (2) Is the sun shining or is it cloudy? (3) Has there been any rain, snow, or hail? (4) How windy is it? (5) Is there much dampness—humidity—in the air?

[illegible]

Sample Multiple-Choice Question

For this type of question, select the best answer and fill in the circle next to the answer you choose. For example:

According to the passage, which question would a weather report answer?

- ☐ (A) Where are we?
- ☐ (B) What time is it?
- ☐ (C) Who are you?
- ☒ (D) How hot is it?

The correct answer is D. The circle with the D in it has been filled in to show that D is the correct answer.

Sample Open-Ended Question

For this type of question, you will write several sentences on the lines provided. For example:

According to the passage, weather is the condition of the air in a certain time and place. Why would it be important to know what the weather is today or what it will be tomorrow? Be sure to use examples or ideas from the passage or your own life to support your answer.

It is important to know what the weather is so you
can plan what you are going to do. If you decide to go
swimming, but you don't know what the weather is
going to be like, you could find yourself swimming
between the raindrops or the snowflakes!

[These are the first two sentences of a good answer.]



Directions: Read the article and answer the questions that follow.

Rocket Balloon

Compiled and created by Laura Buller and Ron Taylor

Illustrations by John Hutchinson and Stan North

If you blow up a balloon and then just let it go without tying the neck with a piece of string, the air will rush out of the balloon and send it zooming around the room, with no pattern to its flight. The following experiment will show you how to make the balloon fly in a straight line.

You Will Need—

Thumbtack

32-inch by 26-inch sheet of lightweight paper

Pencil

String

Scissors

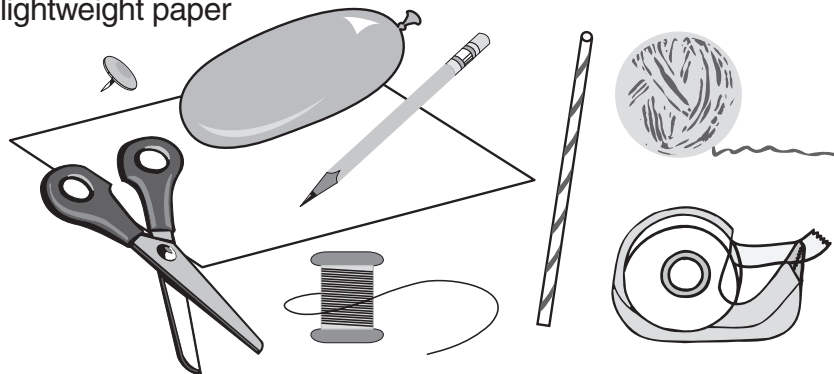
Cellophane tape

2 yards of thread

Drinking straw

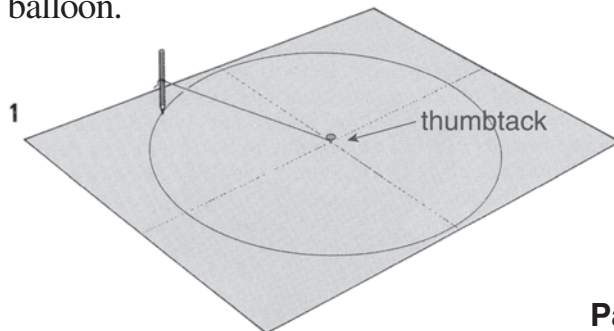
High-back chair

Balloon



PROCEDURE

1. For this experiment you will need a thumbtack, a sheet of lightweight paper about 32 inches by 26 inches, a sharp pencil, a piece of string at least 18 inches long, a pair of scissors, clear cellophane tape, about two yards of thread, a drinking straw, a high-backed chair, and a long, thin balloon.

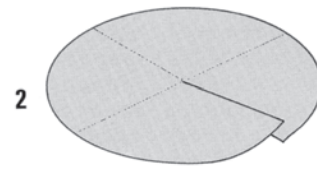


2. Fold the sheet of paper exactly in half vertically and then fold the sheet of paper exactly in half horizontally. Attach one end of the string to the pencil and then make a loop in the other end of the string. Put the thumbtack through the loop of string and place it in the middle of your sheet of paper, where the two folds cross. Be careful of the point of the thumbtack.

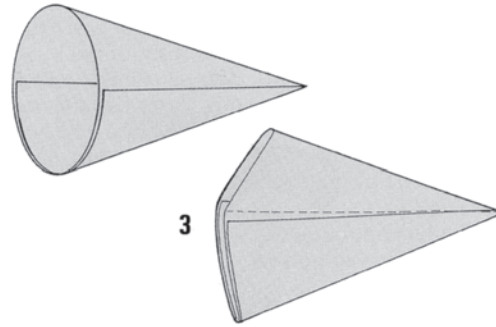
3. Draw the biggest circle that will fit onto your sheet of paper as shown.



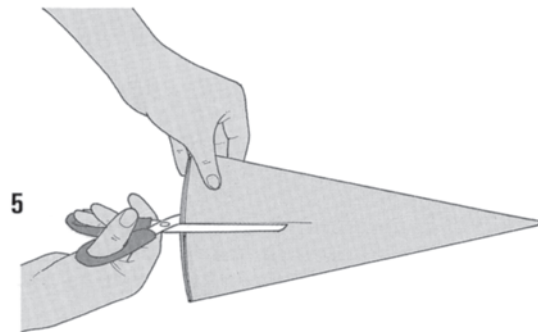
4. Cut out the circle using the scissors; then cut along one fold from the edge of the circle to the center. Overlap the edges of the circle and form a cone with a base diameter of about eight inches.



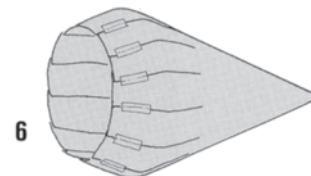
5. Flatten the cone with your hand to make a triangle and then fold this in half. Next, fold the triangle in half again.



6. Make a cut from the base of the triangle, through all the layers of paper, to about halfway up. Next, open out the shape until it forms a cone again.



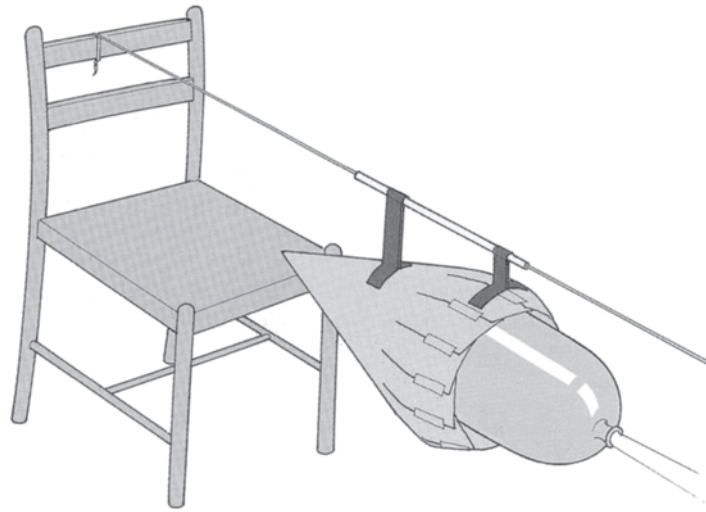
7. Carefully overlap the cut sections and stick one to another with cellophane tape.



8. Tie one end of your thread firmly to the door handle. Slip the drinking straw onto the thread; then tie the loose end to the back of a chair. Adjust the position of the chair so that the thread is pulled taut.

9. Using the cellophane tape again, firmly tape the paper cone (rocket) to the drinking straw, using the diagram as a guide.

10. Blow up the balloon and, holding the end tightly so that the air does not escape yet, push the balloon firmly inside your paper rocket. Now let go. The air coming out of the balloon creates the energy needed to make the rocket move. The straw on the thread keeps the rocket flying in a straight line, thus controlling its flight.



When you have mastered the technique, you can make several rockets and have a lot of fun having races with your friends. Increase the length of the thread between the door and the chair, or try several other shapes of balloons and see what difference these alterations make to the speed of the rocket. With a stopwatch, time how long the journey from the chair to the door takes and see if there is anything you can do to speed up the rocket.



8. The purpose of the first paragraph is to

- Ⓐ introduce the rocket balloon experiment.
- Ⓑ give a summary of the steps in the experiment.
- Ⓒ explain how balloons can fly in a straight line.
- Ⓓ explain how to make a cone to hold the balloon.

9. Which material is used to fasten the rocket to the thread?

- Ⓐ string
- Ⓑ pencil
- Ⓒ thumbtack
- Ⓓ drinking straw

10. What does the word "taut" mean in the following sentence: "Adjust the position of the chair so that the thread is pulled taut"?

- Ⓐ up
- Ⓑ down
- Ⓒ tight
- Ⓓ loose



11. What does the word *alterations* mean in the last paragraph of the article?

- (A) races
 (B) shape
 (C) length
 (D) changes

12. What is the purpose of the thumbtack?

- Ⓐ to find the center of the paper
- Ⓑ to hold the string in the center
- Ⓒ to fasten the cone to the balloon
- Ⓓ to poke a hole in the paper

13. What material in the experiment could not be substituted?

- Ⓐ chair
- Ⓑ straw
- Ⓒ balloon
- Ⓓ string



For the open-ended question on the next page, remember to

- **Focus your response on the question asked.**
- **Answer all parts of the question.**
- **Give a complete explanation.**
- **Use specific information from the article.**



14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment. Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. In the bottom right corner, there is a small black octagonal stop sign with the word "STOP" written in white capital letters.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



**DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.**

APPENDIX A:
SCORING KEYS AND SKILLS FOR ASSESSMENT ITEMS

Scoring Keys and Skills for Assessment Items

Grade 3 Narrative Reading Passage

Brave as a Mountain Lion

Item #	Answer	Skill	Explanation
1	C	W1	Theme
2	A	W3	Extrapolation of Information
3	D	W3	Extrapolation of Information
4	D	W2	Supporting Detail
5	B	A4	Drawing Conclusions
6	C	W3	Extrapolation of Information
7	OE	A3	Forming of Opinions

For sample responses to the reading-based open-ended question, refer to the companion NJ ASK document, *Guide to Criterion-Based Holistic Scoring: A Writing and Reading Handbook*.

Scoring Keys and Skills for Assessment Items

Grade 4 Everyday Text (Reading)

Rocket Balloon

Item #	Answer	Skill	Explanation
8	A	W5	Text organization
9	D	W2	Supporting detail
10	C	W4	Paraphrasing/Retelling (Vocabulary)
11	D	W4	Paraphrasing/Retelling (Vocabulary)
12	B	A4	Drawing Conclusions
13	C	A4	Drawing Conclusions
14	OE	A4	Drawing Conclusions

For sample responses to the reading-based open-ended question, refer to the companion NJ ASK document, *Guide to Criterion-Based Holistic Scoring: A Writing and Reading Handbook*.

APPENDIX B:
TEST SPECIFICATIONS AND SCORING RUBRICS

Test Specifications and Scoring Rubrics

Introduction

To gauge student progress toward meeting the state's core curriculum content standards, the New Jersey Department of Education has developed a comprehensive set of assessments that measure knowledge and skills at grades three, four, eight, and eleven. The third- and fourth-grade New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) is the newest component of the state's assessment program, which also includes the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA) and the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA). Since not every indicator can be assessed through a statewide written examination, individual districts will be involved in measuring the attainment of some performance expectations outlined in the standards.

This document delineates the specifications used to create the third- and fourth-grade language arts assessments and to measure student proficiency in the knowledge and skills outlined for language arts literacy in *New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards* (1996, 2004). The knowledge and skills described for language arts literacy are recursive and cumulative. Students build their skills gradually, developing language ability that increases in complexity as they encounter, analyze, and use language in increasingly complex ways. Curriculum specialists and teachers may use these specifications, along with the *Language Arts Literacy Curriculum Framework* (1998) and the standards themselves, to improve instruction at the district, school, and classroom levels.

What Students Are Expected to Know and Be Able to Do

The purpose of New Jersey's statewide assessments is to measure what students at specific grade levels know and are able to do. The assessments are not designed to be diagnostic nor do students' scores on these assessments equate with classroom grades. Instead, the assessments determine whether students are achieving the knowledge and skills described in New Jersey's core curriculum content standards (NJ CCCS). The Language Arts Literacy components of the state's third-, fourth-, eighth-, and high school assessments focus on students' skills in using language to construct meaning through text. The five language arts literacy standards and cumulative progress indicators that illustrate the standards inform the knowledge and skills that are assessed by the NJ ASK, GEPA, and HSPA, as well as the philosophy inherent in the design of the assessment experience.

Development of the Language Arts Literacy component of the NJ ASK, GEPA, and HSPA began with the premise that assessment is integral to curriculum and, inversely, curriculum is integral to assessment. Good assessment is a means for students to learn about a topic — to ask questions, to speculate, to explore new ideas, and to form tentative opinions — and it should provoke their curiosity. Only when that curiosity is engaged can assessment accurately reflect the knowledge and skills that students have access to and can draw on in their everyday lives and in school.

Through good assessment, too, students should be able to recognize their strengths and challenges as learners. Meaningful reflection on these is essential to the individual's growth and development, and it should be an outcome of any assessment. It is the hope of the educators who served on committees to develop the state's Language Arts Literacy assessments, that as students experience the NJ ASK, GEPA, and HSPA, they will experience the rewards of thinking, learning, communicating, and aesthetic expression.

Overview of the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK)

The Language Arts Literacy component of New Jersey’s statewide assessments is an integrated, project-oriented unit through which students draw upon their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing experiences to think, to learn, to communicate, and to create original work. As with most instructional materials that are familiar to students, the language arts assessments provide a variety of texts, illustrations, and activities that are intended to engage and sustain student interest in the content and sequence of assessment topics and tasks.

The NJ ASK assesses skills in four content clusters:

- Writing
- Reading
- Working with Text (Interpreting Text)
- Analyzing/Critiquing Text

These content clusters are integrated to provide a sequence of diverse written, aural, and visual materials and activities that students will encounter over a two-day period as they read, write, listen, and view:

ASSESSMENT CLUSTER	TASK	TIME
1. Writing: speculate (picture prompt)	story	25 minutes
2. Reading: narrative	MC, OE ¹ questions	50 minutes
3. Listening/reading: poem		
4. Writing: explain (poem-linked prompt)	composition	25 minutes
5. Reading: everyday text	MC, OE questions	25 minutes

The variety and sequence are designed to engage students’ interest and elicit clear demonstrations of what students know and are able to do. In each assessment, students alternate between generating their own text and analyzing text generated by others. This alternation permits them to use and enrich their literacy experiences as they demonstrate their knowledge of and skills in language use in varied contexts of language arts literacy.

Students encounter performance-based tasks for writing, as well as multiple-choice and open-ended items for reading. Most open-ended reading items ask students to write a paragraph or more in response. However, for students taking the NJ ASK, one open-ended question may require students to work with a graphic organizer.

The questions and activities on the NJ ASK are designed to elicit students’ demonstration of the Language Arts Literacy core curriculum content standards that were developed by a committee of teachers, teacher educators, supervisors, administrators, parents, and business representatives. The assessments are also designed to measure students’ demonstration of abilities for Working with Text and Analyzing/Critiquing Text.

¹MC: multiple-choice question or item; OE: open-ended question or item

Working with Text (NJ ASK) focuses on ideas and information that are presented in the text and available either literally or by extrapolation. Questions and tasks ask students to identify or explain a central idea or theme; supporting details; directions, ideas, or other information extrapolated from the text; paraphrasing; text organization; and purposes for reading.

Successful responses to reading questions in this cluster demonstrate that students have synthesized the ideas and information in the text and constructed meaning from what they have read.

Analyzing/Critiquing Text (NJ ASK) focuses on students' analysis of what they have read. These questions provide students with opportunities to reflect on and analyze their understanding of the text. Questions and tasks in this cluster ask students to analyze aspects of the text that lead to their own questioning, predictions, and opinions, or to analyze what specific ideas or information contribute to or reveal in the text.

Students pose or respond to questions that enhance their understanding, predict tentative meanings, form opinions, or draw conclusions about the text and the author's techniques. Questions and tasks that focus on this kind of analysis will ask students to identify or explain the fundamentals and nuances contributed by textual conventions and literary elements.

Writing tasks are scored using a holistic scoring rubric developed specifically to focus on essential features of good writing and to assess students' performance in composing written language. Each writing sample is scored on a 1- to 5-point scale, which is a modified version of New Jersey's Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric.

Students' responses to reading-based open-ended questions, or items, are scored using a 0- to 4-point scale, the Open-Ended Scoring Rubric, which is designed to measure students' levels of understanding. Each open-ended question has specific requirements that guide use of the rubric to score student responses.

SCORING RUBRICS FOR NJ ASK

Writing	Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric
Reading	Open-Ended Scoring Rubric with Open-Ended Scoring Guide

The matrix on the following page shows the content clusters and cognitive skills assessed in the Language Arts Literacy component of the NJ ASK. Although the matrix provides a two-dimensional classification that can be used to categorize certain test items in a single cell, the activities inviting students to generate their own text (writing) will be scored holistically and thus will encompass more than one cell of the matrix.

The third- and fourth-grade assessments invite students to construct meaning as they generate their own texts (written, spoken, and visual) and work with texts generated by others (for reading, listening, and viewing). As students strive to construct meaning, they engage in interpreting, analyzing/critiquing, and extending their own understanding of the text.

	Matrix of Content Clusters and Skills		
	For Generating Text		For Generated Text
	Writing	Speaking	Viewing
Working with Text	Development of central idea Development of supporting details Elaboration Organization of ideas		Recognition of central idea or theme Recognition of supporting details Extrapolation of information/ following directions Paraphrasing/retelling (Vocabulary) Recognition of text organization Recognition of a purpose for reading
Analyzing/ Critiquing Text	Use of writing strategies Use of varied sentence structure/word choice Forming of opinions Development of conclusions Use of textual conventions and literary elements Consideration of audience and purpose		Questioning, Clarifying, Predicting Prediction of tentative meanings Forming of opinions Drawing of conclusions Interpretation of textual conventions and literary elements

Definitions of Content Clusters

The NJ ASK invites students to approach text² (written, aural, and visual) with three different perspectives: interpreting text, analyzing and critiquing text, and extending understanding of the text.

Working With or Interpreting Text

Working with text involves activities and strategies that contribute to reformulating meaning, including:

- Establishing and explaining a central idea or focus,
- Developing explanations and extrapolating information,
- Developing specific purposes and inferring purposes, and
- Planning and recognizing the organization of texts.

Questions in this cluster focus on ideas and information that are presented in the text and available either literally or by extrapolation.

Analyzing and Critiquing Text

Students will be able to pose or respond to questions in ways that enhance their and others' understandings of the text. They will predict tentative meanings of texts and plan texts as temporary thinking on their way to drawing conclusions or forming opinions. These conclusions and opinions will eventually take on more formal expressions when students move to extending their understanding of the text. Through this process of analysis and critique, students will understand both the functions and nuances of textual conventions and literary elements.

Questions and tasks in this cluster provide students with opportunities to reflect on and analyze their understanding of the text. These questions ask students to analyze aspects of the text that lead to their own questioning, predictions, and opinions, or to analyze what specific ideas or information contribute to or reveal in the text.

Extending Understanding of the Text

Students will be able to create original works. Some of these works are textual, more finished products that they can make available to specific audiences and/or for specific purposes. Some extensions of understanding result in the reader appreciating a text or its features, considering other related texts, or interacting with others' related ideas, all of which extend literacy. Some extensions of understanding lead students to take action. This action will include problem-solving, making decisions, and creating an original work, which may lead to heightened social awareness and action.

²**Definition of *text*:** The term *text*, as used in these specifications, is consistent with the use of the term in the Language Arts Literacy component of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. *Text* refers to any printed or oral use of language. It also includes any visual communication that we “read.”

WRITING

Writing is a complex and recursive process that requires students to generate, organize, and convey ideas and information for a variety of purposes and audiences. Effective writers are able to communicate in varying forms and styles. For this component of the assessment, third- and fourth-grade students will complete two writing tasks: one speculative and one expository.

The writing prompts will present topics that allow students to draw on material in the assessment as well as from their own prior knowledge to establish a context for their writing. In one task, students will view a picture and use their understanding of the picture to develop a story. In a second task, students will listen to a poem and then respond to a written prompt that extends an idea introduced by the poem.

Each writing task will provide space for students to plan their ideas. Students will be encouraged to use that space to organize their ideas using a pre-writing strategy (e.g., making a web, a list, or some other sort of graphic organizer) of their own choosing. The instructions will direct students to write their story or composition on the lined pages provided. This version of their writing is considered a first draft.

As part of a large-scale assessment, each type of writing task is administered in a consistent format and in a constant time segment of 25 minutes. Instructions guide students to use the first few minutes to develop ideas for their writing and the last few minutes to review what they have written and, if needed, revise part(s) of their texts. Students will have a writer's checklist that they may use as a resource while they are writing.

Writing prompts will introduce the following elements:

- meaningful topics that broaden and enrich students' perspectives;
- a clear focus;
- a clearly identifiable theme or central idea;
- a clearly stated purpose;
- a context for reflection as an aid to elaboration.

Writing prompts will invite responses that are:

- age- and grade-level appropriate;
- clearly focused with a clear purpose;
- effectively elaborated with details;
- logically organized, with a clear opening and closing;
- varied in their vocabulary and sentence structure;
- reflective of a strong stance;
- sensitive to audience.

Notes:

1. The prewriting/planning space for each writing task is designed solely for students' brainstorming and is not scored.
2. Due to the time constraints of large-scale assessment, students will not have enough time to completely rewrite or copy over their drafts.

READING

Narrative Text

For the purposes of this assessment, “narrative text” is defined as literature written primarily to tell a story. Good narrative literature, which establishes or develops a conflict, addresses common aspects of human existence. Because appropriate literature may contain unsettling or disturbing issues or events, text selected for the assessment will provide a positive resolution and affirm the dignity of the human spirit. Selections will provide students with opportunities to grow intellectually, socially, and emotionally as they consider universal themes and diverse cultures and perspectives.

Narrative passages will be selected from previously published literature of between 900 and 1,300 words for grade 3 and 1,400 and 2,000 words for grade 4. Students will respond to multiple-choice and open-ended questions about those passages. The texts will have a strong thematic focus, follow traditional narrative structure, and contain the following elements:

- significant themes that are age- and grade-level appropriate;
- a clearly identifiable problem/conflict and resolution;
- a well-organized plot with clearly developed and meaningful events;
- well-developed characters;
- settings integral to the plot;
- literary elements, such as imagery and foreshadowing;
- a range of vocabulary for which adequate context is provided.

Everyday Text

“Everyday text” is defined as text that people encounter in their everyday lives. It is text written and designed to convey information about a topic and/or to show how to do something. Everyday texts of varying formats will be selected and/or adapted from previously published sources such as magazines, newspapers, “how-to” books, and hands-on activity kits and workbooks. Everyday texts will range in length from 700 to 1,000 words for grade 3 and from 1,000 to 1,400 words for grade 4. The texts will have a strong central idea or purpose and will contain the following elements:

- engaging topics that are age- and grade-level appropriate;
- a clear, positive focus;
- a clearly developed explanation of ideas, activities, or actions;
- a clearly developed sequence of ideas, activities, or actions;
- performable activities or actions;
- vivid and clear illustrations;
- a range of vocabulary for which adequate context is provided.

Notes:

1. In addition to the two text types mentioned above, students will listen to and read poetry related to topics introduced in other sections of the assessment.
2. Item types will not be bound to specific text types but will apply across all genres (e.g., everyday texts may present literary elements).

SKILLS SPECIFICATIONS

Writing

Writing is a complex process in which students draw upon their speaking, listening, reading, and viewing experiences to think, learn, communicate, and create. Students taking the NJ ASK will be expected to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. In each situation, specific writing prompts will establish the task, provide ideas for writing, and relate to topics introduced in other sections of the assessment.

The NJ ASK will introduce two types of writing tasks. The first one asks students to speculate and the second to explain. The criteria for assessing each written response are set by the scoring rubric. Student responses at the elementary level are scored with a modified version of the Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric.

Students will:

- respond clearly and appropriately to a given prompt;
- select a focus and provide appropriate details to support that focus;
- organize the response to include an introduction, appropriate transitions, and a conclusion;
- use elaboration to engage the audience;
- use varied sentence structure and word choice;
- use conventions of print and literary forms;
- use language appropriate to the audience and purpose of the writing task.

Writing Prompts for NJ ASK

Picture Prompts, which are presented in full color, depict an artist's interpretation of a scene from a piece of published literature. Students are not expected to retell that published story but are encouraged, instead, to use some or all of the details in the picture to create their own stories. Students who have had sustained exposure through reading and listening to many types of literary texts demonstrate writing abilities that include an understanding of text structures and appropriate organization, elaboration of meaningful details, logical progression of ideas, effective use of transitions, varied and sophisticated syntax, and vivid word choice.

Poem Prompts, which are verbal writing tasks, are linked to ideas introduced in a poem that students listen to and/or read silently as the examiner reads the poem aloud. The poem-linked prompt asks students to explore an idea from the poem and to relate the idea to their experience and/or understanding in a sustained text that is called a *composition*. The poem prompt uses such words as *describe*, *explain*, and *analyze* in order to encourage students to develop their ideas more fully. All poem prompts propose categories of ideas that are intended to help students structure their writing, but the scoring of their writing provides quite a bit of latitude in the actual shaping of their topic. Please note that the purpose of this task is to elicit sustained writing on a topic introduced in the prompt and that students are not being asked to write a poem. Students who write a poem will be scored WF (Wrong Format).

Reading

Reading is a complex process through which readers actively construct meaning and connect with others' ideas. Current research defines a competent reader not as one who demonstrates mastery of a set of isolated skills, but as one who integrates information in the text with what he or she already knows.

Students taking the NJ ASK will read and respond to two text types: narrative and everyday. For each text type, multiple-choice and open-ended questions will serve to assess students' literal and inferential thinking. Questions will be based on those skills that critical readers use to understand, analyze, and evaluate texts. Students will be assessed on their ability to interpret and critique/analyze the content, meaning, and organization of texts.

Students will:

- recognize a theme or central idea.
- recognize details that develop or support the main idea.
- extrapolate information and/or follow directions.
- paraphrase, retell, or interpret words, phrases, or sentences from the text.
- recognize the organizational structure of the text.
- recognize a purpose for reading.
- use reading strategies (e.g., questioning, clarifying, predicting).
- make tentative predictions of meaning.
- make judgments, form opinions, and draw conclusions from the text.
- interpret textual conventions and literary elements.

Each reading passage is followed by seven questions focused on that passage. These questions include both multiple-choice and open-ended questions that target their skills in two clusters: Working with Text and Analyzing/Critiquing Text. For students taking NJ ASK3, greater emphasis is given to the Working with Text cluster.

PASSAGE TYPE	Grade 3 Questions	Grade 4 Questions	TIME
Reading: narrative or story	6 MC, 1 OE	5 MC, 2 OE	50 minutes
Reading: everyday text	6 MC, 1 OE	6 MC, 1 OE	25 minutes

NJ ASK focuses more on students' understanding and analysis of the text than on recall. Therefore, students benefit from using a number of essential reading strategies. Some assessment questions, for example, identify a specific page number to encourage students to turn back to the text to review and to confirm ideas and information before they respond. Even when a question omits a specific page reference, however, reviewing the text is a useful strategy to confirm and to enhance understanding.

Following are descriptions of the items that are developed for the two reading clusters:

Working with Text

Working with Text focuses on ideas and information that are presented in the text and available either literally or by extrapolation. Successful responses to these questions demonstrate that students have synthesized the ideas and information in the text and constructed meaning from what they have read.

These questions target students’:

Recognition of a central idea or theme

A central idea or theme is a statement that is broad enough to cover the entire scope of the reading passage. The central idea or theme may be stated or implied, but clues to it are found in the ideas that tend to recur in the text. Examples of a central idea or theme statement include:

Imagination helps us to solve problems.
Ordinary objects can be used to create unusual art.

Recognition of supporting details

These questions focus on meaningful details that contribute to the development of a character or the plot, or that develop ideas and information that are essential to the central idea of a text.

Extrapolation of information

These questions focus on ideas and information that are implied by, but not explicit in, the text. For example, students may be asked to draw from cues provided in the text in order to identify how a character feels.

Paraphrasing, Vocabulary

These questions focus on the meaning of words used in the text and elicit students’ use of effective reading strategies to determine the meaning. Targeted vocabulary will always occur within a semantic and syntactic context that students should draw on to respond to the question. These questions provide page numbers to encourage students to turn back to the text to examine the context.

Recognition of text organization

Text organization encompasses the patterns of organization that characterize the respective genres. For the narratives, questions focus on setting, character, and plot as well as on any distinctive pattern within the story such as repetition. For everyday texts, questions address structural features such as section topics, charts, and illustrations, in addition to patterns of organization within the text (such as sequence, comparison-contrast, or cause-effect).

Recognition of a purpose for reading

These questions, which focus on the reader’s purpose, address reasons for reading a particular text. A story, for example, may convey specific information about a species of animal or a culture although that may not be the primary purpose of the text.

Analyzing/Critiquing Text

Analyzing/Critiquing Text focuses on students' analysis of what they have read. These questions provide students with opportunities to reflect on and analyze their understanding of the text. Questions in this cluster ask students to analyze aspects of the text that lead to their own questioning, predictions, and opinions, or to analyze what a specific idea or piece of information contributes to or reveals in the text.

These questions target students' analytical skills:

Questioning, Clarifying, Predicting

These questions draw on students' use of reading strategies to construct meaning. The questions introduce a focus and a context for responding (e.g., asking a question of the author or a character), and ask students to select and analyze ideas and information from the text to develop a response. Given the nature of this task, these questions are almost always open-ended items.

Prediction of tentative meaning

These questions focus on statements within the text that introduce some ambiguity: either the ideas are not fully explained or the statement uses language that can be read in two or more ways. For these questions, students use their knowledge of language and of the context within the reading passage to analyze the meaning of a particular statement.

Forming of opinions

These questions elicit students' response to aspects of the text. The questions introduce a focus (e.g., whether the main character would make a good friend) and ask students to select and analyze ideas and information from the text to develop a response. Given the nature of this task, these questions are always open-ended items.

Making judgments, Drawing conclusions

These questions ask students to draw conclusions based on knowledge they have garnered from the ideas and information within the text. For example, students might be asked to analyze how the setting (e.g., the season of the year) affects the sequence of events within a story, or to analyze the effect of skipping a step in a certain procedure.

Literary elements and textual conventions

These questions focus on devices used by the author. Students might be asked to analyze what a specific metaphor conveys about a character in the story, or why an author uses italics for certain words.

Scoring Methods, Charts, and Checklists

The Language Arts Literacy component of the NJ ASK offers a variety of multiple-choice questions, open-ended items, and performance-based tasks. The differences in these activities demand varying scoring methods that reflect the distinctive qualities of the respective types of tasks students will encounter.

Writing

A modified version of the Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric (see page 61) is used to score the sustained writing tasks. This 1- to 5-point scale emphasizes content/organization, sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. As in the past, students will also have a copy of the Writer's Checklist (see page 64) to use as a resource while they write.

Reading

The Open-Ended Scoring Rubric, a 0- to 4-point scale, is used to score student responses to open-ended items for reading. This rubric, which is annotated in the Open-Ended Scoring Guide, emphasizes students' use of appropriate situations and ideas in the text as support for their explanation and analysis (see pages 62-63).

GRADE 3 CLUSTER	TASK	POINTS	TOTAL POINTS
Writing: speculate (picture prompt)	story	10	
Writing: explain (poem-linked prompt)	composition	10	
WRITING TOTAL			20
Reading: narrative	6 MC	6	
Reading: narrative	1 OE	4	
Reading: everyday text	6 MC	6	
Reading: everyday text	1 OE	4	
READING TOTAL			20

GRADE 4 CLUSTER	TASK	POINTS	TOTAL POINTS
Writing: speculate (picture prompt)	story	10	
Writing: explain (poem-linked prompt)	composition	10	
WRITING TOTAL			20
Reading: narrative	5 MC	5	
Reading: narrative	2 OE	8	
Reading: everyday text	6 MC	6	
Reading: everyday text	1 OE	4	
READING TOTAL			23

NEW JERSEY REGISTERED HOLISTIC SCORING RUBRIC (MODIFIED)

In scoring, consider the grid of written language	Inadequate Command	Limited Command	Partial Command	Adequate Command	Strong Command
Score	1	2	3	4	5
Content and Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Minimal response to topic; uncertain focus No planning evident; disorganized Details random, inappropriate, or barely apparent No apparent control Severe/numerous errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Attempts to focus May drift or shift focus Attempts organization Few, if any, transitions between ideas Details lack elaboration, i.e., highlight paper Numerous errors Excessive monotony/same structure Numerous errors Numerous serious errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Usually has single focus Some lapses or flaws in organization May lack some transitions between ideas Repetitious details Several unelaborated details Errors/patterns of errors may be evident Little variety in syntax Some errors Patterns of errors evident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally has opening and/or closing Single focus Ideas loosely connected Transitions evident Uneven development of details Some errors that do not interfere with meaning Some variety Generally correct No consistent pattern of errors Some errors that do not interfere with meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening and closing Single focus Sense of unity and coherence Key ideas developed Logical progression of ideas Moderately fluent Attempts compositional risks Details appropriate and varied Few errors Variety in syntax appropriate and effective Few errors Few errors
Usage					
Sentence Construction					
Mechanics					

NON-SCORABLE RESPONSES	NR = No Response	Student wrote too little to allow a reliable judgment of his/her writing.	Content/Organization	Usage	Sentence Construction	Mechanics
	OT = Off Topic/ Off Task	Student did not write on the assigned topic/task, or the student attempted to copy the prompt.				
	NE = Not English	Student wrote in a language other than English.				
	WF = Wrong Format	Student did not respond in the format (or mode) designated in the prompt.				
<p>Note: All unscorable responses, (NSRs), with the exception of NR, must be coded by the Scoring Director.</p> <p>© New Jersey State Department of Education</p>						

OPEN-ENDED SCORING RUBRIC
For Reading, Listening, and Viewing
(Modified)

Points	Criteria
4	A 4-point response clearly demonstrates understanding of the task, completes all requirements, and provides a clear and focused explanation/opinion that links to or extends aspects of the text.
3	A 3-point response demonstrates an understanding of the task, addresses all requirements, and provides some explanation/opinion using situations or ideas from the text as support.
2	A 2-point response may address all of the requirements, but demonstrates a partial understanding of the task, and uses text incorrectly or with limited success resulting in an inconsistent or flawed explanation.
1	A 1-point response demonstrates minimal understanding of the task, does not address part of the requirements, and provides only a vague reference to or no use of the text.
0	A 0-point response is irrelevant or off-topic.

Open-Ended Scoring Guide for Reading, Listening, and Viewing

Points	Guide
4	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesizes the passage/story • Draws appropriate and logical conclusions that are elaborated • Makes relevant and controlled use of text • Provides appropriate details and accurate explanations
3	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May synthesize the story but specific text reference may only be implied • Provides a simple but accurate explanation • Makes relevant use of text to support or explain • Draws appropriate conclusions that may be elaborated
2	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some text reference which may be incorrect or provides a general explanation that omits specific links to the text • May focus on irrelevant or minor details • May simply retell the story or passage • May imply story details by relating life experiences, by describing story elements, or by identifying concepts in the passage
1	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misinterprets the task or fails to address part of the task • Presents one simple idea or detail • Provides no explanation • Does not clearly refer to the text
0	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completely misinterprets the task • Merely selects key words or phrases from the task or the title • Shows no evidence of having read the story

Each writing task is scored by two readers. These two scores are added together to determine the total points achieved for the given task. Each open-ended reading item is also scored by two readers. Unlike the writing scores, however, the two reading scores are averaged.

As students respond to student-constructed tasks and items, they will have access to and be able to use task-specific tools that will help them. For each writing task, students will have a Writer's Checklist to use as a resource for their writing.

Writer's Checklist

Remember to

- ☐ Keep the central idea or topic in mind.
- ☐ Keep your audience in mind.
- ☐ Support your ideas with details, explanations, and examples.
- ☐ State your ideas in a clear sequence.
- ☐ Include an opening and a closing.
- ☐ Use a variety of words and vary your sentence structure.
- ☐ State your opinion or conclusion clearly.
- ☐ Capitalize, spell, and use punctuation correctly.
- ☐ Write neatly.

For each open-ended reading item, students will have the following directions to guide them as they write their response.



For the open-ended question on the next page, remember to

- **Focus your response on the question asked.**
- **Answer all parts of the question.**
- **Give a complete explanation.**
- **Use specific information from the article.**

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